

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### THE GREAT OVATION

When at length we once more saw our native planet, with its well-remembered features of land and sea, rolling beneath our eyes, the feeling of joy that came over us transcended all powers of expression.

In order that all the nations which had united in sending out the expedition should have visual evidence of its triumphal return, it was decided to make the entire circuit of the earth before seeking our starting point and disembarking. Brief accounts in all known languages, telling the story of what we had done was accordingly prepared, and then we dropped down through the air until again we saw the well-loved blue dome over our heads, and found ourselves suspended directly above the white topped cone of Fujiyama, the sacred mountain of Japan. Shifting our position toward the northeast, we hung above the city of Tokyo and dropped down into the crowds which had assembled to watch us, the prepared accounts of our journey, which, the moment they had been read and comprehended, led to such an outburst of rejoicing as it would be quite impossible to describe.

One of the ships containing the Japanese members of the expedition, dropped to the ground, and we left them in the midst of their rejoicing countrymen. Before we started--and we remained but a short time

suspended above the Japanese capitol--millions had assembled to greet us with their cheers.

We now repeated what we had done during our first examination of the surface of Mars. We simply remained suspended in the atmosphere, allowing the earth to turn beneath us. As Japan receded in the distance we found China beginning to appear. Shifting our position a little toward the south, we again came to rest over the city of Peking, where once more we parted with some of our companions, and where the outburst of universal rejoicing was repeated.

From Asia, crossing the Caspian Sea, we passed over Russia, visiting in turn Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Still the great globe rolled steadily beneath, and still we kept the sun with us. Now Germany appeared, and now Italy, and then France, and England, as we shifted our position, first north then south, in order to give all the world the opportunity to see that its warriors had returned victorious from its far conquest. And in each country as it passed beneath our feet, we left some of the comrades who had shared our perils and our adventures.

At length the Atlantic had rolled away under us, and we saw the spires of the new New York.

The news of our coming had been flashed ahead from Europe and our

countrymen were prepared to welcome us. We had originally started, it will be remembered, at midnight, and now again as we approached the new capitol of the world the curtain of night was just beginning to be drawn over it. But our signal lights were ablaze, and through these they were aware of our approach.

Again the air was filled with bursting rockets and shaken with the roar of cannon, and with volleying cheers, poured from millions of throats, as we came to rest directly above the city.

Three days after the landing of the fleet, and when the first enthusiasm of our reception had a little passed, I received a beautifully engraved card inviting me to be present in Trinity Church at the wedding of Aina and Sydney Phillips.

When I arrived at the church, which had been splendidly decorated, I found there Mr. Edison, Lord Kelvin, and all the other members of the crew of the flagship, and, considerably to my surprise, Colonel Smith, appropriately attired, and with a grace for the possession of which I had not given him credit, gave away the beautiful bride.

But Alonzo Jefferson Smith was a man and a soldier, every inch of him.

"I asked her for myself," he whispered to me after the ceremony, swallowing a great lump in his throat, "but she has had the desire of her heart. I am going back to the plains. I can get a command again, and

I still know how to fight."

And thus was united, for all future time, the first stem of the Aryan race, which had been long lost, but not destroyed, with the latest offspring of that great family, and the link which had served to bring them together was the far-away planet of Mars.